United Nations A/C.2/56/SR.15

General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
12 November 2001

Original: English

Second Committee

Summary record of the 15th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 25 October 2001, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Barnwell (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Guyana)

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In the absence of Mr. Seixas da Costa (Portugal), Mr. Barnwell (Guyana), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 99: Operational activities for development (*continued*)

(a) Triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (A/56/174, A/56/70-E/2001/58, A/56/70/Add.1-E/2001/58/Add.1, A/56/70/Add.2-E/2001/58/Add.2, A/56/320 and Add.1) (*continued*)

(b) Economic and technical cooperation among developing countries (A/56/39, A/56/134 and Add.1, A/56/465) (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Grutle** (Norway) said that in the past three years the United Nations had made good progress towards a more effective and unified presence at the country level. Poverty reduction, which was at the heart of international development cooperation efforts, must be based on nationally owned strategies developed through broad-based participatory processes but managed by countries themselves. External partners should gear their own efforts to national strategies, improve coordination among themselves and harmonize practices and procedures to avoid duplication of effort and excessive burdens on the administrative capacity of developing countries. Human rights must form an integral part of global and national poverty reduction and conflict prevention efforts.

2. A clearer focus on goals, results and partnerships was now emerging, and assistance should be provided in support of sound national plans adapted to national requirements. Member States must provide the resources required on a predictable and assured basis. Over-dependence on a limited number of donors should be avoided. The United Nations should be a trusted policy and technical adviser for the development and implementation of country-owned development strategies. The main focus of its efforts should be the strengthening of national institutions and improvement of governance. Its essential role at regional level was to contribute to inter-State dialogue, trade and cooperation, and to promote and increase the sharing of information and knowledge on effective development approaches. At the international level, the Organization helped to create normative frameworks in terms of principles, goals and guidelines.

3. Another key role of the United Nations was to support the development, implementation and evaluation of the poverty-focused development strategies of low-income countries. That should be the main focus of the common country assessments (CCA) and the point of departure for the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The CCA/UNDAF process remained the single most important instrument for improved United Nations agency collaboration and coordination. Each agency of the United Nations system should base its country programme fully on UNDAF, which in turn must be fully geared towards national poverty reduction development strategies. Consideration should be given to merging the CCA and UNDAF into one common United Nations strategy.

4. Continued differences in the rules and procedures of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) agencies was a major impediment to effective United Nations collaboration and placed a heavy additional burden on partner Governments. Firm action must now be taken to streamline those rules and procedures, which should be flexible enough to allow alignment with national planning procedures. The UNDG should establish a work plan for the harmonization of rules, regulations and procedures by the end of 2002. The move towards joint meetings of the United Nations governing bodies should be further pursued, and an in-depth assessment of their work carried out with a view to making their role more strategic and policy-oriented.

5. **Mr. Manalo** (Philippines) said that, although the international community was right to focus on the fight against terrorism, it must not neglect the fight against the daily terror of poverty. Indeed, the heightened sense of vulnerability everywhere following the 11 September tragedy could lead to a dangerous erosion of support for the required increase in global funding for operational activities for development; that must be avoided. At the same time, efforts should continue to make operational activities more effective. His delegation welcomed the enhanced development role of the United Nations and the expansion of the scope of its operational activities, for example, in crisis situations and in post-conflict conditions.

6. A vital component for the full participation of developing countries in the attainment of development goals was capacity-building, which should include harnessing the ability of State and non-State actors and other stakeholders to participate in the design and pursuit of national development goals and programmes. While improving the accountability of the States through good governance was crucial, improving the social accountability of the business sector and strengthening civil society were also necessary.

7. The underlying weaknesses in the economic and social infrastructure of developing countries must not be overlooked in any development efforts. In that regard, there must be a continuing focus on sectors such as agriculture, which provided a livelihood for substantial portions of the world's population.

8. Development for all meant mainstreaming gender into all development efforts and processes. His delegation supported gender budget analysis as an important tool of accountability. He reaffirmed the universal, multilateral and grant character of United Nations operational activities. Moreover, national plans and priorities constituted the only viable frame of reference for United Nations system programming and operational activities. The focus of operational activities for development should now shift from internal coordination of development assistance to integration into national efforts. Programmes and projects should be prepared with greater attention to ways in which their content would contribute to the overall national development strategy.

9. It was notable that the current triennial review coincided with preparations for the International Conference on Financing for Development. Funding for operational activities should be sufficient, stable, predictable and assured. While it was vital for the international community to reverse the declining trends in ODA, simply increasing the level of ODA would not ensure that development targets were met. A vigorous effort to ensure the efficient, effective and accountable use of ODA that was consistent with and directly contributed to national development strategies was equally important. The International Conference should provide additional stimulus for South-South cooperation. In that regard, the capacities of the United Nations Development Programme, particularly the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, should be enhanced.

10. **Mr. Djumala** (Indonesia), associating himself with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the operational role of the United Nations development activities could help to adapt international development goals and objectives to practical United Nations work at national level and to develop specific country-defined and country-driven programmes at that level. However, financial resources were still not commensurate with the increasing needs of the developing countries. Indonesia welcomed the multi-year funding framework (MYFF) initiative, and fully concurred with recommendation 4 in the report (A/56/320) which re-emphasized the need for a substantial and sustained increase in the core or regular resources of operational activities for development. Indonesia also hoped that the International Conference on Financing for Development would go a long way towards productively addressing those issues.

11. It was particularly important to improve the capacities of developing countries to overcome the fragmented approach to national development programming and to redesign social and economic policies in a more harmonized and coherent way. Indonesia welcomed the recommendation that the United Nations system should intensify the capacity-building initiative in order to support national governments in their coordination of all forms of external assistance more effectively and efficiently. National plans and priorities were the only viable frame of reference for the United Nations system's national programming of operational activities at country level, and so it was necessary to ensure the continuing involvement and leadership of national authorities in programming and managing such activities, taking into account the constructive engagement of relevant stakeholders.

12. Indonesia agreed with recommendation 9 in the report that the United Nations system organizations should review their efforts in implementing the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 53/192 with respect to using capacity-building as a goal of technical assistance provided through their operational activities. South-South cooperation was increasingly seen as an effective instrument for optimizing development through the sharing of the resources and expertise of the developing countries. Indonesia therefore fully agreed with recommendation 20 in the report requesting the General Assembly to

reiterate its call for a more concerted and coordinated effort to integrate and mainstream technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) into the framework of United Nations development cooperation and to identify the necessary mechanisms for that purpose. That could best be done through the revision of TCDC guidelines, the establishment of TCDC focal points, the dissemination of best practice and the promotion of indigenous knowledge, experience and know-how.

13. Indonesia attached great importance to the ability of information and communication technologies (ICT) to accelerate development and empower programming countries, and therefore welcomed recommendation 2 in the report that the United Nations system be encouraged to support, through its operational activities for development, national efforts to acquire the capacities and infrastructure required to mobilize ICT at the service of development. Indonesia hoped that the General Assembly would also encourage the system to collaborate with the United Nations ICT Task Force, particularly in furnishing adequate financial assistance.

14. As a developing country striving to build democracy while facing a number of formidable challenges, Indonesia placed a very high premium on the creation of employment, and in promoting such employment tended to focus on people-centred sustainable development. Indonesia greatly appreciated the excellent technical assistance being delivered through United Nations operational activities which bolstered such strategies.

15. **Mr. Smaïli** (Algeria), associating his delegation with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, acknowledged the importance of United Nations operational activities for development and said that the Millennium Declaration was the basic reference point for them. The exercise had become more complex because the slowdown in world economic growth had led to a reduction in resources earmarked for financing for development and poverty reduction just at the moment when the needs of developing countries were increasing. The challenges of globalization and the urgent needs of developing countries for better integration into the new world economic order called for the strengthening of United Nations operational activities. In redefining its objectives, the United Nations system must take account of the pressing demands of developing countries, which were having to gear their development efforts to the requirements of integration in the world economy.

16. Information and communication technologies (ICT) were an excellent instrument for enhancing cooperation for development, and Algeria welcomed the establishment of the United Nations ICT Task Force. Algeria also wished to encourage any cooperation which that Task Force could develop with other institutions of the United Nations system, as well as the Bretton Woods institutions and other international institutions, to facilitate the transfer of new technologies to the developing countries so as to increase the cohesion and effectiveness of operational activities. The recent reforms and reorganizations of United Nations agencies had given rise to some concerns, specifically in terms of time and cost, as well as of the fear that the institutional instability they produced might be prejudicial to the programmes of recipient countries, especially at a time when official development assistance was declining and United Nations funds and programmes were lacking basic resources. Even if the private sector must play an increasingly active role in development, its involvement must not change the nature of operational activities. It was encouraging that some donors had undertaken to increase their contributions to development, and it was to be hoped that their example would be followed by other partners. Algeria shared the concerns regarding the mobilization of financial resources, expressed by the Secretary-General in his report. The forthcoming International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development would be two opportunities for the international community to consider ways of remedying the situation.

17. **Mr. Laurin** (Canada) said that the reforms of the United Nations operational activities must continue. The reforms regarding strategic frameworks must aim at much closer integration with national development policies and programmes. In order to minimize the demands placed on Governments and civil society for the development of those frameworks, the United Nations development system and other development partners, particularly the World Bank, should work towards harmonizing existing coordinating frameworks so as to avoid duplication of effort, and to improve collaboration. UNDAF should constitute the United

Nations response to nationally developed poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs). The CCA and UNDAF common frameworks had to translate into improved coherence and complementarity in terms of the various country programme instruments used by United Nations organizations.

18. Country ownership would necessitate not only the full participation of Governments in the development of programming instruments but also the involvement of national structures and institutions and representatives of civil society. There should also be increased dialogue and coordination with all relevant external development partners, including bilateral donors and multilateral institutions. In that regard, Canada would support an increased role for the United Nations in building the capacities of Governments to develop national development frameworks, enhance the quality of national and local participatory processes and improve their coordination of external assistance.

19. The Resident Coordinator system was a key instrument for field-level coordination, and was functioning better, but Canada was worried by the increased burden which its maintenance placed on the core resources of UNDP. Given the increased scope and complexity of development activities, with development organizations often operating in conflict and post-conflict situations, the capacity of the United Nations development system became crucial at the field level, where a different mix of skills, expertise, services and working methods were now required. Canada appreciated the efforts of United Nations funds and programmes which had undertaken major reorganizations in order to strengthen country teams and provide more strategic support from headquarters.

20. General calls for the simplification and harmonization of rules and procedures had fallen on deaf ears, and apart from efforts to harmonize the programme approval process little had been done. The General Assembly might consider setting a more precise timetable for the implementation of simplified and harmonized rules and procedures, or might request the Executive Boards of UNDP and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), or the funds and programmes, to play a more active role in that regard. Joint Executive Board meetings might also consider further sharing of services at the country level.

21. The internal generation of resources within economies had by far the greatest potential to produce the resources necessary for sustained development. Regular or core funding for United Nations operational activities remained short of the critical mass necessary for effective and well-coordinated programme delivery. MYFFs might have raised expectations too high with regard to the rapidity of the recovery and the level of resumed increases, but the decline in the level of core funding had now been arrested and a large majority of donors had increased their contributions, particularly to UNDP, over the last two years. It was important to ensure strong core resources, which should be maintained and increased both as a percentage of total resources and in absolute terms. Other resources, particularly third party co-financing, continued to increase, and their contribution was also important, but it was necessary to foster better alignment and greater synergy between core and non-core funds. Canada supported the establishment of thematic trust funds aligned with the Organization's priorities as a way of ensuring that those resources did not create distortions in programming.

22. In view of the establishment of the MYFFs and pledging sessions in the respective boards of United Nations funds and programmes, the pledging conferences for operational activities should be abolished.

23. **Ms. Anzorge** (Poland) said that her delegation endorsed the statement made on behalf of the European Union. Referring to the report of the Secretary-General on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities (E/2001/66), she stressed that United Nations development cooperation should increasingly be used to facilitate sharing in the opportunities and meeting the challenges of globalization. In particular, the countries of central and eastern Europe with economies in transition should continue to benefit from United Nations development assistance in selected areas. Those countries' experience should be given wider coverage.

24. Regional cooperation should serve as a two-way bridge between global and national operational activities for development. A draft UNDP regional cooperation framework (RCF) for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States for the period 2002-2005 was currently under discussion which highlighted three important interrelated issues of governance, namely, democratic, economic and environmental governance. That effort was a practical example of United Nations development cooperation

becoming "upstream", involving advocacy and policy dialogue under the leadership of Governments and engaging civil society and other external partners.

25. The competitiveness of United Nations operational activities for development needed to be constantly reviewed by donor and recipient Governments, United Nations agencies and other actors, with a view to ensuring maximum effectiveness and programme country ownership of development cooperation undertakings. United Nations Development Programme field offices had an important role to play in that regard, in conjunction with donor and recipient Governments and other stakeholders.

26. The need for cooperation between United Nations agencies, on the one hand, and the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), on the other, had been discussed at the second regular session of the Executive Boards of UNDP and UNFPA; similar discussions should also take place at the joint meeting of the Boards of Governors of the World Bank and IMF.

27. The United Nations multilateral system had an irreplaceable role to play in implementing the common agenda as defined in the Millennium Declaration, especially in light of the comparative and competitive advantages of the United Nations system's operational activities for development.

28. **Mr. Rasheed** (United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)) said that members of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) recognized that there was scope for improving the CCA/UNDAF process, particularly in the areas of strategic focus and results orientation; indeed, they were working in that direction. The UNDG Executive Committee had identified the following major actions that needed to be taken: (1) strengthening the linkages with the Millennium Declaration and the strategic value and relevance of the UNDAF process; (2) improving process quality and strengthening partnerships and collaboration; and (3) rationalization and simplification of related tools, instruments and processes. To be more efficient, the CCA/UNDAF process needed to result in less work for Governments and the members of the county team, not more.

29. Without pre-empting policy guidance from the triennial policy review, UNICEF envisaged follow-up actions in several areas: (1) improving the guidance provided to country teams; (2) improving and re-orienting training; (3) improving the process of lessons learned and dissemination of that information; and (4) strengthening and mainstreaming management and accountability within the Resident Coordinator system and within individual agencies. UNICEF was also working to ensure a closer relationship with external instruments and processes, such as the poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) and the other instruments used by the Bretton Woods institutions. Regular forums had been established where those issues were discussed, and clear ideas had been developed on how the CCA/UNDAF process could complement the work carried out by national and international partners.

30. The follow-up to the Millennium Declaration was bringing the many disparate areas of United Nations activity together as an integrated whole. With children as a cross-cutting issue in the Millennium Declaration, it was to be hoped that the upcoming special session of the General Assembly on children would be attended by the more than 75 Heads of State or Government who had announced their participation before the tragic events of 11 September had made it necessary to postpone the session. The expected renewed commitment to children and to specific actions in the new decade would support key elements of the Millennium Declaration.

31. The mobilization of resources was a shared responsibility of all Governments. At issue also was the nature of resources and the continued relevance and functioning of multilateralism in the United Nations. In the case of UNICEF, while a number of Governments had continued to provide generous support, and several had even announced overall increases, there was a continuing and alarming decline in regular core resources. Regular resources were essential to make it possible to continue implementing all areas of the triennial policy review, supporting sector-wide approaches and improving management and operational structures. While UNICEF benefited from the increasingly generous contributions of non-government donors through its National Committees, the fact that core resources were now lower than other resources was affecting both programmatic and institutional development. The amounts involved were relatively small compared to overseas development assistance budgets, and it was therefore essentially a question of political will.

32. On the issue of simplification, the four UNDG agencies had suggested that the reports of executive directors to the Economic and Social Council on the implementation of the reform programme and the provisions of the triennial comprehensive policy review, as well as other Economic and Social Council issues, such as follow-up to conferences and humanitarian and disaster relief assistance, should be discontinued, with the resulting reporting obligations being included within other existing documents. The consolidated issues paper could then become the basis for discussions at both the executive boards and the Council.

33. **Mrs. Izata** (Angola) said that operational activities for development should respond to the needs of developing countries in a flexible manner and in accordance with the development plans, policies and priorities of the recipient Governments. They should be enhanced by a substantial increase in funding, commensurate with the increasing needs of developing countries.

34. Her delegation agreed with the recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General on the triennial comprehensive policy review, particularly recommendation 17, on relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development (A/56/320, para. 69). After more than 30 years of continuous conflict, Angola was confronted with a critical situation as it addressed the peace process, humanitarian issues and the problems of economic and social recovery. Its first preoccupation was to strengthen and build on the peace process in order to ensure greater stability.

35. Angola's country cooperation framework for UNDP had been developed initially for the three-year period 1997-1999 and had been extended for the year 2000. The main themes of the framework were assistance in post-conflict situations, poverty eradication and governance. The implementation of the framework had started very well; however, as indicated in the country review, serious problems had been encountered during implementation. Some programmes and projects had had to be terminated, and few substantive results had been achieved. It was important now to determine why those apparently good programmes had produced meagre results, and what lessons the Government and UNDP could draw from the experience. Regardless of what decisions were made for the future, UNDP needed to continue its thorough review of operational procedures to improve quality and efficiency and be able to respond to the priorities of recipient countries.

36. **Mr. Ibrahim** (Nigeria) said that his delegation agreed with the statement made in the report of the Secretary-General to the effect that the essentials for effective development cooperation were sufficient, secure and stable financing, a dynamic institutional structure and appropriate means of design and delivery (E/2001/66, para. 32). It was particularly important that core funding should be increased. His Government was grateful to those partners who had been faithful in their commitments and contributions to core resources and hoped that more would emulate them. Similarly, it was to be hoped that the United Nations development system would continue to make sustained efforts to broaden the donor base.

37. His delegation appreciated the critical role which the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) initiative was playing in recipient countries, as well as the role of UNDAF and the common country assessment (CCA) in assisting developing countries in the follow-up and implementation of major United Nations conferences. He also welcomed the contribution of the UNDAF/CCA process to the development of a "system culture" as an important team-building mechanism. The new information technologies should be harnessed to enhance cooperation and synergy among the relevant programmes, funds and agencies at country levels. The agencies belonging to the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) should downplay their administrative sovereignties and promote initiatives capable of streamlining the programme approval process.

38. The multi-year funding framework was one answer to the problem of declining core resources, but it needed to be strengthened. In addition, the programming cycle needed to be harmonized, and his delegation was happy to note the positive results achieved in that area. Attention should be paid to other areas that also required harmonization.

39. His delegation was satisfied with the appreciable progress made in the area of common premises and the United Nations House initiative. The involvement of recipient countries in the provision of land for the construction of office buildings by UNDG member bodies was an effective way of establishing United Nations Houses. His delegation wondered why that

modality was considered to be of high risk and was the least preferred.

40. Information and communication technology (ICT) was a powerful tool for poverty reduction and was central to the emergence of a knowledge-based economy and information society. However, for developing countries to enjoy the benefits of ICT, there must be a rapid development of physical infrastructure and investment in human resources. His delegation looked forward to the early take-off of the United Nations ICT Task Force.

41. Gender mainstreaming should continue to receive consistent consideration in country programmes and designs, as should the use of technical cooperation among developing countries.

42. **Mr. Kittikhoun** (Lao People's Democratic Republic), speaking on behalf of the group of landlocked developing countries, said that those countries endorsed the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

43. The delegations he represented especially appreciated the work of the UNDP Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries to expand South-South cooperation, which should be viewed not as a replacement for North-South cooperation, but as a complement to it. Triangular cooperation with financial support from developed countries as well as from international and regional organizations could promote ownership of the development process by developing countries. In the context of TCDC, a broader understanding was needed of the special problems and needs of the landlocked developing countries. Those countries were pleased at the progress made in facilitating South-South policy and information exchange through the Web of Information for Development (WIDE). WIDE would provide a global platform for the international development community, and the developing countries to help the landlocked developing countries.

44. The TCDC modality also involved close cooperation between landlocked and transit developing countries and donor countries in finding a solution to the problem of transit transport systems by improving and developing infrastructure facilities and services and strengthening the institutions and human resources dealing with transit transport. The international ministerial meeting on transit transport cooperation, to be held in Kazakhstan in 2003, would address a range of issues affecting landlocked developing countries. Triangular cooperation would play a very important role in that regard.

45. **Mr. Wahba** (United Nations Development Programme) said that the review of operational activities had acquired increased significance since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 53/192. UNDP had seriously pursued greater coordination of such activities through the harmonization of cycles, programme approval processes, common premises and services and the Resident Coordinator system. In particular, much progress had been made in defining the roles of the Bretton Woods institutions and the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and the modalities for cooperation, through follow-up to the Millennium Declaration and improvements to CCA/UNDAF.

46. Recent evaluation of CCA/UNDAF had shown the need for those mechanisms to be country-driven and country-owned and for programming procedures to be streamlined. Ninety-seven countries had so far completed assessments of their national needs and priorities. By the same token, UNDAF was emerging as an important country-led instrument for the coordination of operational activities, as it was regarded as the best plan for the use of United Nations resources to further national development goals.

47. UNDP had tried its utmost to ensure a true reflection of the diversity and substantive strengths of the Resident Coordinator system, and looked forward to further increasing the number of participating women.

48. The Millennium Declaration provided a framework for action with precise time-bound targets. Coordination between the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) at the global level, and UNDP, through UNDG, had facilitated the alignment of activities at the country level with development goals cited in the Declaration.

49. In describing the changes made since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 53/192, he stressed the need to simplify procedures and harmonize programme cycles, drawing special attention to the acceptance of the common approval process for country programmes, accountability and ongoing work on a common outline for programme documents. The capacity to demonstrate firm achievement was crucial

to the reform of UNDP into a modern, agile and responsive institution.

50. Response to the Programme's results-based management approach had been positive. The downward trend in regular resources had stabilized and there had even been indications of a slight upward movement.

51. Equally important were the increased contribution to the core from up to 14 Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) donors. Programme country contributions indicated the importance of the continued viability and multilateral character of UNDP. In order to achieve the results expected within its mandate, UNDP needed to bolster its country presence and policy support role. A strengthened UNDP would be well poised to realize the goals of the Millennium Declaration, an essential element in global development cooperation, and would provide sustainability to the search for peace and security and depth to humanitarian relief.

52. **Mr. Kogda** (Burkina Faso) said that the United Nations system had a definite comparative advantage in all activities aimed at promoting access to basic social services and satisfaction of basic needs. In the case of Burkina Faso, the implementation of CCA/UNDAF had been a participatory and dynamic process. Country assessment had led to a common understanding of issues and had created a context in which the goals and strategies of the United Nations system in the area of development assistance could be achieved. UNDAF, on the other hand, had provided useful lessons in cooperation.

53. In general UNDAF activity had centred on the need to consolidate a sustainable human development approach and to promote initiatives in the fight against poverty, on conditionality, good governance and mainstreaming of a gender perspective in cooperation programmes. It was clear that sectoral programmes occupied a privileged place in the distribution of donor funding. In aspects which were specific to the United Nations, the evaluation of cooperation programmes acknowledged the relevance of areas of concentration to countries' development priorities, although there had been some shortcomings at the implementation stage. Effective implementation of the UNDAF process implied strenuous action to combat poverty, to promote good governance and to establish an effective strategy for complementarity and synergy between activities financed by United Nations agencies.

54. In terms of national execution, Burkina Faso favoured the creation of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms which would serve as social, economic and geographic databases and provide information on the labour market.

55. Given the success of the CCA/UNDAF process, the new cooperation strategy should not only be based on governmental strategies but should pursue the internalization of recommendations made by international conferences and capacity-building for emergency response. Burkina Faso supported the analysis of the global performance of the United Nations system and welcomed the recommendations of the Secretary-General aimed at providing new guidelines for operational activities within the global economic context.

56. **Mr. Yampolsky** (Ukraine) highlighted the strengthening of the Resident Coordinator system and inter-agency coordination to match United Nations operational activities with the priorities of recipient countries. Moreover, the role of United Nations funds and programmes in boosting national capacity-building and assistance to developing countries and countries in transition as they adapted to globalization had been vastly improved. He believed that UNDP should continue to play a central role in coordinating the activities of United Nations agencies in Ukraine, particularly with regard to the implementation of multifaceted, long-term projects.

57. Ukraine supported all efforts aimed at ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations system of operational activities, maintaining its dynamic international structure and improving partnerships with all players in the development process at the national level. Referring to the experience in Ukraine, he said operational activities should focus on promoting market reform, including development of entrepreneurship, technical assistance and advice in the building of institutional infrastructure and trade-related capacity, and on ensuring sustainability of microeconomic reforms to accelerate the integration of economies in transition into the world economy.

58. Meaningful information had been provided in document A/56/70-E/2001/58 on progress in the implementation of MYFF, and Ukraine encouraged

United Nations operational funds to continue their work, taking into account the comparative advantages of each agency. He also wished to stress the importance of full implementation of programming, national capacity-building and UNDAF. Ukraine urged further steps to ensure the availability of resources for development and looked forward hopefully to the International Conference on Financing for Development.

59. The consequences of the Chernobyl disaster deserved special attention by United Nations operational activities agencies. The Government of Ukraine welcomed the increasing involvement of the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies in activities aimed at eliminating the long-term consequences of the catastrophe. The report issued by a multidisciplinary inter-agency mission clearly indicated the growing need for transition from emergency response to implementation of the long- and mid-term programmes aimed at social and economic rehabilitation and development of the affected region. The recent appointment of an assistant administrator of UNDP as coordinator would help to address the future developmental emphasis of United Nations Chernobyl activities and support through appropriately coordinated efforts.

60. **Mr. Enkhsaikhan** (Mongolia) stressed the value of South-South cooperation, which should enhance the capacity of developing countries to generate technical and scientific innovations and adapt technology to serve their basic needs. Such efforts should focus on capacity-building in scientific education. Furthermore, regional and subregional cooperative mechanisms involving Governments, business and research circles should be further encouraged.

61. The Web of Information for Development had great potential, and the next logical step would be an increased and more structured issue-driven emphasis on problem areas. The Web could serve as a hub for collecting and disseminating comprehensive information on the problems of the least developed, landlocked and small island developing countries. Opportunities should be explored to develop collaborative programmes in the Web on capacity-building, in order to create discussion at the regional and subregional levels involving Governments, business and academic circles.

62. His Government appreciated the challenging task before the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries and commended its efforts to mobilize and direct resources to address the critical problems of South-South cooperation, particularly the problems faced by landlocked developing countries. Cooperation between the landlocked and transit developing countries had been steadily improving. It was important for the Special Unit to continue to provide technical and financial assistance to efforts making a practical contribution to South-South cooperation and addressing developmental concerns. An agreement on transit traffic facilitation between Mongolia, China and the Russian Federation would make Mongolia one of the important transit routes from North-East Asia to Europe and Central Asia and serve as an important additional transit route for huge emerging markets in Russia and China.

63. **Mr. Valera** (Mexico) said that the Millennium Declaration and recent international conferences provided a frame of reference for operational activities of the United Nations system for development, and reiterated the need to preserve universality, neutrality and multilateralism in operational activities, based on the principles of non-conditionality and full respect for national priorities.

64. Effective cooperation for development required sufficient, secure and stable financing, a dynamic institutional structure and appropriate methods of planning and execution. There was an urgent need to reverse the downward trend in the level of core resources. In that regard, Mexico welcomed the decision of the European Union to allocate 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product to official development assistance, and wished to express its gratitude to the members of the European Union and the other industrialized countries which had already achieved that goal and had set even more ambitious and generous targets.

65. It was important to continue creating new and innovative forms of collaboration, both financial and managerial, between the United Nations, international financial institutions, regional development banks, federal and local authorities, non-governmental organizations and the population at large. Mexico was aware that financing of operational activities were still far from achieving the critical mass necessary for efficient programme delivery and hoped that the changes in framework targets would help to reverse the

decline in core resources and the tendency to support short-term emergency activities to the detriment of long-term development.

66. His Government renewed its commitment to United Nations operational activities. International technical and economic cooperation was an effective means of supporting government efforts. Mexico recognized the synergy of three-way cooperation and had participated in joint action for the benefit of third countries throughout Latin America. The experience of Latin America and the Caribbean demonstrated that developing countries could stimulate renewed momentum in technical cooperation through horizontal cooperation programmes. The challenge was to promote interaction through the identification of innovative schemes to encourage technical and economic cooperation between developing countries.

67. Mexico was convinced of the importance of strengthening the United Nations as the best form for the promotion of international cooperation in all the topics on the vast international agenda. Mexico wished to express its appreciation for the contribution of UNDP in actively promoting national technical cooperation efforts.

68. **Mr. de Moura** (Brazil) said that his delegation welcomed the progress achieved by the United Nations system in the area of coordination. In that regard, the growing interrelationship of mandates and areas of action among the organizations of the system called for a more active role by the Economic and Social Council in terms of supervision and guidance. Referring to UNDAF and its potential for increasing coordination, he said that a common monitoring and evaluation mechanism could serve as the foundation for continuous coordination among programmes, funds and specialized agencies at the field level. However, it was of the utmost importance to invest in mechanisms that would permit the assessment of progress and achievements as well as the impact of operational activities.

69. The United Nations system should focus on the mainstreaming of poverty eradication, capacity-building and gender equality into its activities in the developing world. Organizations with the size, neutrality, institutional framework and multilateral scope of UNDG had an important role to play in the development process. The United Nations agencies, programmes and funds must have the ability, resources and flexibility to provide a rapid response to emergency situations resulting either from natural disaster or conflict. Further attention should also be paid to action that could have a long-term structural impact on development. In that regard, he stressed the importance of technical assistance in building up capacities and knowledge and strengthening local institutions and organizations. South-South cooperation, especially TCDC, played a very important role. He therefore called for further support from the international community and donor countries for such cooperation, which was a valuable complement to North-South cooperation.

70. His delegation welcomed the new focus placed by the United Nations programmes and funds on a culture of performance and accountability. That new focus was being built through results-oriented management and the results-oriented approach of the multi-year funding frameworks and other mechanisms. However, despite the progress achieved, there had been no significant reversal in the declining trend of core resources.

71. Sufficient, predictable and stable financial resources were needed if development cooperation was to be effective. He therefore urged donor countries to increase their voluntary contributions to the United Nations programmes and funds. His delegation welcomed the attraction of new sources of financing, as long as they did not subject technical cooperation to the principles and processes used by the financial sector. Nor should those new sources impair the neutral and universal scope of United Nations operational activities for development.

72. **Ms. Whittemore** (United States of America) said that the United Nations system was an indispensable partner to developing countries that valued its neutrality, universality, expert advice and assistance. The reforms that the operational agencies had been carrying out over the last few years, especially those targeted at enhancing coordination and programme coherence, promised to keep the United Nations development system a relevant and effective partner to programme countries in the increasingly complex current environment. Mobilizing the financial resources required for programme countries to achieve the international development goals and to fund their overall development plans remained an issue of great concern. In that regard, the Secretary-General's report, in addition to emphasizing the value of healthy core regular budgets, had clearly recognized the value to

programme countries when domestic resources were mobilized to help alleviate poverty and stimulate economic growth. Benefits from the effort to increase domestic contributions would be considerable in terms of capacity-building, since such efforts would provide enhanced institutional and human capacity as well as transparency in internal financial management — two major conditions for attracting foreign direct investment.

73. The reforms undertaken by the organizations of the United Nations system were needed and had been impressive. Internal coordination had improved and the vision of what the United Nations operational agencies could contribute to the development of programme countries had become better defined. In the process, the United Nations system was developing impressive in-house expertise to achieve the Organization's ambitious international development goals. That expertise not only provided the foundation for effective development assistance, but more important, it was universal and neutral. That was a most valuable asset to programme countries. Although her delegation concurred with the principle of country ownership of its own development process, it urged programme countries to take full advantage of that asset and exploit it to the fullest extent when formulating their development strategies. An analytically sound CCA and UNDAF were necessary if any development process was to succeed. While much valuable work had been done in that regard, her delegation believed that the proliferation of frameworks posed a problem for programme countries and their development partners in terms of efficiency and cost. The problem would be overcome if the international community adhered to the statement in paragraph 2 of the Secretary-General's report, that United Nations development cooperation operated on the basis of the principles of universality, neutrality and country specificity, and that its objective was to provide a coherent and integrated response to national development efforts in full respect of national priorities.

74. Her delegation endorsed the concept of TCDC as a major component of development and the full participation of the United Nations system of organizations in that endeavour. However, the organizations should respect their universality and neutrality and, therefore, be vigilant and not participate directly or indirectly in activities that led to the formation of regional positions on issues such as trade. While regional cooperation was an important component of full development, the primary effort had to be country-specific and country-based.

75. **Mr. Beti** (Observer for Switzerland) said that, since it was undeniable that harmonized and simplified United Nations development cooperation procedures would make a real and practical difference, especially for partner Governments, his delegation could not understand why progress in that matter had been so slow and why that process had not yet been completed. Turning to the core funding of United Nations activities for development, he regretted that the introduction of multi-year funding frameworks had not contributed to reversing the negative trends in that area, especially the steady decline in ODA. Since an effective and durable solution to that problem would be very difficult to find under current circumstances, the future funding of United Nations operational activities must remain a major topic on the agenda for the coming years. In that regard, it would be even more crucial to make the best possible use of available resources. That meant, in particular, that every possible effort must be made to further improve the efficiency and effectiveness of all United Nations development activities. For example, better use must be made of joint cooperation frameworks like UNDAF and the poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs), while joint programming could be applied on a much broader basis.

76. He would strongly recommend that a clear preference should be given to multi-donor trust funds over individual project trust funds. He would further recommend that the United Nations should conduct pilot tests of the "common-pool approach" to ODA. While reducing management complexity, helping to resolve coordination difficulties among donors, minimizing transaction costs, and thus maximizing the impact of development support, such an approach could allow programme countries to really control the process, which would ultimately make ownership a true reality.

77. His delegation also hoped that the International Conference on Financing for Development would permit progress inter alia on issues related to trade, debt management, international private funding and public-private partnership.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.